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The Community Leader

Redlands

WE'RE ALL ABOUT GOOD NEWS

YOUR LOCAL VILLAGES HAVE CHRISTMAS ALL WRAPPED UP!

December is here, bringing with it long sunny days, sticky ice cream fingers, chips by the bay, and those (sometimes not-so) glorious late-afternoon thunderstorms. It's the perfect time to stroll the waterfront, soak up the sea breeze, and reflect on the year that's been. We hope your 2025 was one to remember!

As our suburbs continue to grow, with new faces and fresh developments, one thing remains the same: our strong sense of community spirit. It's what makes our local villages like Wellington Point so special.

This festive season, let's celebrate that spirit by shopping locally. Our local shopping strips are easy and breezy and packed with incredible gifts. Every time you spend close to home, you're not just buying a gift or a meal – you're supporting the people who make our community thrive. Whether it's commissioning

a unique gift from a local artist, indulging in a delicious locally-made Christmas cake, treating a friend to lunch, or spending an afternoon browsing local boutiques, florists, and homeware stores, your support keeps our neighbourhoods vibrant.

And while we're spreading joy, let's remember those doing it tough. A small act of kindness in the form of a donation, a meal, or a helping hand can make a world of difference.

So this Christmas, let's turn up the volume on community spirit. Shop local, share a smile (because it feels great), and enjoy a merry, sun-soaked Christmas.

Pictured: Wellington Point traders Cathy Stone, Meltine Purwo, Glenys Mercer and June Cranage.



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ROTARY CLUBS UNITE TO INSTALL PEACE POLE AT WELLINGTON POINT

CONTRIBUTED BY CAPALABA ROTARY

The Rotary Clubs of Wellington Point and Capalaba will come together to celebrate peace and community harmony with the installation and dedication of a Peace Pole at the Wellington Point Village Green.

The Peace Pole, bearing the universal message May Peace Prevail on Earth, stands as a symbol of unity, hope, and global friendship. Its installation reflects Rotary’s ongoing commitment to promoting peace – one of the organisation’s seven key areas of focus.

Peace Poles were presented to the Birkdale Scout Group, Birkdale State School and Wellington Point Community as part of the Victory in the Pacific Reflection Day Celebrations and Commemoration on Saturday August 16, 2025.

The unveiling ceremony, to be held on Saturday December 6, 2025 at 4:30pm, will bring together members of both clubs, local councillors, community groups, and local families.

The event will include a short dedication and speakers, and a reflection on the importance of peace at both local and international levels.

“The Peace Pole is a simple yet powerful reminder that peace begins with us – within our homes, schools, and communities,” said Bill York, president of the Rotary Club of Capalaba.

“By placing it in the heart of our village, we’re creating a lasting symbol of Rotary’s values and our shared hope for a more peaceful world,” added Martin McKenna, president of the Rotary Club of Wellington Point.

The Peace Poles can be found in more than 200 countries around the world, with over 250,000 installations standing in public parks, schools, and places of worship. The Wellington Point Village Green Peace Pole joins this global network, linking the Redlands Coast community to a worldwide movement for peace.

Col Sutcliffe, OAM, one of the organisers of the Victory in the Pacific Reflection Day, said that, “The Peace Pole is also important to the Redlands as the message for Victory in the Pacific was first received at the Birkdale US Army Radio Receiving Station for transmission to General Douglas MacArthur in Brisbane, and the first beers to

celebrate peace were drunk at the Wellington Point Hotel. This fact is one of the messages on the Peace Pole.”

The project was a joint initiative of the two Rotary Clubs, supported by Redland City Council and local volunteers.



Crs Paul Bishop (left) and Wendy Boglary (third from left) with Mayor Jos Mitchell (right) proudly join Ans to share her story as a PoW at the Peace Poles. Photo: Supplied.



Sat
6 Dec



Christmas in the Park

Santa Paws
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& more*



Scan for event details

*Limit of 60 Santa Paws bookings. Limit of 400 Christmas craft units. Visit stockland.com.au/shoreline for full details.

A MERRY & SAFE CHRISTMAS FOR ALL CREATURES GREAT & SMALL

The festive season is approaching, and Emma Lagoon, spokesperson for the RSPCA, has tips on the special care pet owners need to exercise during the festive season.

“Make sure your pet, no matter what it is, has plenty of water and shade,” she says. “Don’t leave animals tied up in the backyard; the sun moves throughout the day, and restraints can get tangled so the animal can’t reach shade and water.

“When you’re travelling, don’t leave pets in hot cars or on hot ute trays. If you are planning to go away, book in early with a reputable pet sitter; having back-up options is a good idea. Not every animal will enjoy being in a kennel, so if that’s your option, check the kennel, its routines, and food supplied – pets are creatures of habit!”

Emma says that clipping dogs in hot weather is appropriate for some breeds, but others need their long coats, so it’s best to consult with the pet’s vet and groomer about the best option.

“Some dogs really appreciate the clam shell pools to cool off in,” she says, “and it’s a good idea to walk dogs in the cool times of the day or on the grass – hot pavements can burn their paws.”

If you find injured wildlife, call the local wildlife carer or the RSPCA on 1300 264 625, between 7:00 am and 7:00 pm. If the injured animal is anything that can bite or scratch, contact an expert.

While adopting an animal from the RSPCA is a good and caring act, it requires forethought – especially during this season of gift-giving.

“Make sure you’re not gifting a pet as a surprise for someone,” says Emma. “It should be a family decision, not impulse buying. Pets are a lifelong commitment.”

Watch for toxic foods and pets this Christmas; these are all harmful: cooked bones, onions, garlic, chocolate, caffeine, nuts, grapes, raisins, and sultanas (including those in Christmas cake), as well as fatty and preserved meats.

“We’ve also had dogs come into the RSPCA with corn cobs stuck in their tummy, so do not leave them lying around,” says Emma.

“And if you’re going away or there are storms/fireworks, ensure your pet’s microchip is up to date and they have a collar with ID in case they get lost.”



Photo: Supplied.



CAPALABA SPORTS CLUB

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www.capalabasportsclub.com.au

"Wishing all our members and guests a Safe and Happy Christmas"


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COMMUNITY ORGANISATION PROFILE

CRIME STOPPERS BAYSIDE

CONTRIBUTED BY ROBERT PLUMMER

Crime Stoppers Brisbane Bayside supports a safe community by promoting the anonymous reporting of crime. We have volunteers across the bayside and Redland City areas, supported by Crime Stoppers Brisbane Bayside Volunteer Area Committee, winners of the 2024 Queensland Volunteer Area Committee of the Year award.

In addition to supporting anonymous reporting, the group promotes online safety with free E-scam presentations to community groups, via public forums, and at lifestyle villages. You can request a free presentation by visiting our Facebook page or emailing Crime Stoppers Queensland.

We would like to share the message below to help our community stay safe this festive season.

KEEP WATCH THIS FESTIVE SEASON

As Queenslanders gear up for the festive season, many of us will be heading away on holidays, spending more time outdoors, or simply enjoying the warmer weather with neighbours and friends. It's also a time when our streets can look a little different with more visitors, more deliveries, and sometimes, more opportunities for suspicious activity to go unnoticed.

Crime Stoppers Queensland is encouraging everyone to stay alert and look out for things that seem out of place in your neighbourhood. This could include unfamiliar vehicles parked for long periods, people loitering near homes or businesses, or someone looking into yards or sheds. Even small details can help police connect the dots and prevent crime in your community.

If something doesn't look or feel right, trust your instincts, and make the right call:

- In an emergency or if you see a crime in progress, call 000.
- For non-urgent matters, contact Queensland Police on 131 444.
- To share information anonymously, call Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or visit crimestoppersqld.com.au.

Your information could be the missing piece that helps solve or prevent a crime.

So, while you're celebrating this festive season, keep an eye out for anything unusual and help keep your neighbourhood safe for everyone.



Crime Stoppers Bayside volunteers at Wellington Point. Photos: Supplied.



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SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW FOR YOUR FREE PROPERTY REPORT





LOCAL EVENTS

See what local events are happening in your community.

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MARKET 2 MARKET

If you're looking for something to do locally, check out The Community Leader's What's On page here and online.



KIDS' CHRISTMAS WREATH WORKSHOP

Monday December 15, 9:30am to 10:30am, Wellington Point Farmhouse Restaurant and Café, 2/623 Main Rd, Wellington Point

EnviroMentoring and Wellington Point Farmhouse are excited to join forces to present a festive Christmas Wreath Workshop. Designed for children aged four to 10, this hands-on event invites families to craft beautiful wreaths using local foliage. Bring your primary-school aged child, niece, nephew, or grandchild (supervision is required for younger children). Enjoy refreshments and the charming farmhouse setting while celebrating the season sustainably. Tickets are \$30 per child and space is limited, so book early via the QR code.



MATER CHRISTMAS MARKETS

Saturday December 13, 10:00am to 2:00pm, RPAC Events Hall, Middle Street, Cleveland

The Mater Private Hospital Redland Auxiliary invites the community to the Mater Market at Redland Performing Arts Centre, Cleveland. This festive, family-friendly event features over 30 local artisans and community groups offering handmade Christmas-themed items. With free entry and something for all ages – from toddlers to seniors – it's the perfect way to kick off the holiday season. For more details, go to www.rpac.com.au.



FAMILY MOVIE: GRUMPY CAT'S WORST CHRISTMAS EVER

Saturday December 13, 10:30am to 12:00pm, Victoria Point Library

Grumpy Cat's Worst Christmas Ever comes to Victoria Point Library on Saturday, 13 December 2025. Join this free family-friendly screening and discover how a grumpy pet shop cat and a special 12-year-old girl form an unlikely bond. Will Christmas cheer melt Grumpy Cat's icy heart? All ages welcome, no bookings required. Rated PG.



HANDEL'S MESSIAH – REDLAND CITY CHOIR

Saturday December 13, 2:00pm to 4:20pm, RPAC, Middle Street, Cleveland

Redland City Choir returns to the RPAC stage under the baton of Jacob Cavanough to present *Handel's Messiah* – a timeless choral masterpiece. Featuring soloists Anita Taylor, Dr Ron Morris, Elliott Beauchamp, and Harrison Hammett, this moving performance also showcases rising stars from the Griffith Conservatorium. A cherished Redlands tradition, this year's concert blends community voices with emerging talent in a powerful celebration of music and spirit. Don't miss the stirring *Hallelujah Chorus* and the joy of this festive event. Secure your seats now for a truly uplifting Christmas experience. For tickets, go to rpac.com.au.



CREATE AND CONNECT: CHRISTMAS CANVAS EMBROIDERY

Tuesday December 16, 9:30am to 11:00am, Capalaba Library

Join the festive fun at Create and Connect! Adults are invited to paint and embroider a Christmas-themed canvas to brighten their home. No experience is needed, just book in, bring your holiday spirit, and enjoy a free, social crafting session at the library. All materials are provided. Bookings are essential and can be made by scanning the QR code.



TWILIGHT MAKERS MARKET

Saturday December 20, 4:00pm to 8:00pm, Raby Bay Harbour Park, Shore Street West, Cleveland

Discover the magic of the Twilight Makers Market, held at Raby Bay Harbour Park in Cleveland. With over 60 artisan stalls, delicious food trucks, and live local music, it's a great family outing! It's the perfect opportunity to do your Christmas shopping by the bay in the cool of the evening. Located opposite Cleveland train station, this vibrant market showcases a diverse range of handmade treasures and creative flair. Follow on socials or visit the website www.twilightmakersmarket.com.au to stay in the loop!

REDLAND CITY CHOIR PRESENTS HANDEL’S MESSIAH AT RPAC

CONTRIBUTED BY JUDY BUTLER, REDLAND CITY CHOIR

The Redlands Performing Arts Centre will come alive on December 13 as the Redland City Choir presents one of the world’s most beloved choral works, *Handel’s Messiah*. Under the baton of esteemed conductor Jacob Cavanough, the 85-voice choir will deliver a stirring performance that promises to be both majestic and deeply moving.

Joining the choir are four talented soloists: soprano Anita Taylor, contralto Dr Ron Morris, tenor Elliott Beauchamp, and baritone Harrison Hammett. Their artistry will be supported by a 21-piece orchestra, ensuring audiences experience the full grandeur of Handel’s timeless masterpiece. From expressive solos to the triumphant *Hallelujah Chorus*, the evening is set to be a highlight of the Redlands Coast Christmas calendar.

Since its founding in 2013, the Redland City Choir has grown into a vibrant community ensemble. Open to all without audition, it has become a musical family united by a love of singing and a commitment to sharing joy through performance. The annual RPAC concert has quickly established itself as a cherished tradition, drawing audiences from across the region.

This year’s program carries added significance, featuring a special collaboration with talented students from the Griffith Conservatorium. The partnership brings together seasoned community voices and emerging artists, creating a rich tapestry of sound and a celebration of musical mentorship.




Photo: Supplied.

The event is made possible through the generous support of Redland City Council and RPAC, alongside the dedication of choir members who rehearse tirelessly to bring this ambitious work to the stage.


Tickets can be purchased online at rpac.com.au.

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Summertime in Redland City



Mayor's Christmas message



Hello Everyone. As we prepare for the festive season and get ready to welcome 2026, it's an opportune time to appreciate what makes the Redland Coast a special place to call home. This year, across our mainland townships and island communities, we've seen countless examples of neighbours looking out for one another, volunteers giving their time generously, and families supporting local events, businesses, and traditions that strengthen our shared sense of belonging.

Christmas reminds us of the importance of connection - of taking time to slow down, appreciate the people who matter most, and extend kindness to those who may need it. Whether you're celebrating along our beautiful coastline, enjoying time in our parks, or catching the ferry to visit friends and loved ones on the islands, I hope this season brings you peace and the chance to recharge.

We can look to the New Year with gratitude for the resilience and community spirit that

continue to shape our city. The year ahead will bring opportunities to work together to support sustainable growth, work to deliver for our community, protect our natural environment, strengthen local services, and create a thriving future for generations to come.

On behalf of Redland City Council, I want to give a heartfelt thank you to the team members for their diligent hard work throughout the year. I also want to thank community members who engaged, provided feedback and gave their time to assist the city and other residents.

I wish everyone a safe, joyful Christmas and a hopeful, prosperous New Year.



Cr Jos Mitchell
Mayor of Redland City
Email: mayor@redland.qld.gov.au

Christmas vibes at RPAC

Experience all the joy and sparkle of the season at Redland Performing Arts Centre!

Don't miss the soaring sounds of big brass (*Brisbane Excelsior's Big Brassy Christmas*), holiday classics with a smooth twist (*A Merry Motown Christmas*), a much-loved tale brought to stage (*Love Actually*), glorious voices singing your most beloved carols (*The 7 Sopranos*) and Handel's timeless Christmas masterpiece (*The Messiah*).

There's also a host of FREE community events:

- *Redland Sings! Christmas* (9 December)
- Mater Private Hospital Redland Auxiliary Christmas Markets (13 December)
- Christmas Bubble and Lights Extravaganza (13 and 17–21 December).

For bookings and info, visit rpac.com.au or call **3829 8131**.



Christmas

on Redlands Coast



Join us for a festive coastal celebration throughout the city.

Scan here or visit redland.qld.gov.au/Christmas for our full program.

📌 Tips for summering safely



Discover the dashboard

Summer = severe weather. Stay up to date with the latest emergency information at Redlands Coast Disaster Dashboard dashboard.redland.qld.gov.au



Splash safely

Swim at patrolled beaches where possible, between the red and yellow flags.



Keep cool

Practice sun safety, drink water and avoid being out in the heat of the day. Our libraries are great places to cool off!



Beat the bite

Wear loose, light-coloured, long clothing and repellent to avoid mozzies, especially if heading out during their favourite feeding times (dawn and dusk). Also, don't forget to empty pooling water around your home to limit breeding spots!



Personal and home security

Home alone or out and about? Check out the Queensland Government's tips and resources on personal safety and home security www.qld.gov.au/emergency/safety

Seasonal opening hours

Some Council services, including our libraries, Redland Animal Shelter, RPAC Box Office, Redlands IndigiScapes Centre, RecycleWorld and Redlands Coast Visitor Information Centre, will have varied opening times over the festive period.

Our customer service centres and call centre will also be closed on Christmas Day, reopening Monday 5 January 2026.

Kerbside waste collections will continue as normal, with Christmas Day collections commencing at 5am. Our recycling and waste centres will close on Christmas Day only.

Need help? Our 24-hour number **3829 8999** will be available at all times.

Opening hours will be available on redlandsc Coasttoday.com.au

School's out, fun's in!

With a full schedule of events and activities across Redlands IndigiScapes Centre, Redland Art Gallery, RPAC and our libraries, school holiday boredom has been banished.

Ideas to get you started...

- *Outdoor explorers* – go on a minibeast safari or big backyard play at IndigiScapes
- *Make it yours* – get crafty and creative with a host of library activities
- *Drop-in arts* – *Explore and Draw...*and more, with Redland Art Gallery

See what's on offer at redland.qld.gov.au/whatson



Unlock the prize portal!

Council's Summer Reading Challenge, run through our libraries, encourages young readers to keep their skills up over summer to be in the running for weekly prizes!

There's also a final grand prize, where the winner can select Dreamworld annual passes, a Bluey's World gift pack or a Nintendo Switch.

This year, entries into the prize portal can be earned by reading books, visiting the library and getting creative!

Visit the libraries to collect your reading challenge activity booklet, complete a new weekly challenge and go on a special quest to find the Golden Key.



Redland City Mayor's

Christmas Appeal

2025

Help our charity partners, Redland Community Centre, Meals on Wheels Cleveland and Victoria Point – Redland Bay, and the Star Secret Santas for Seniors Appeal, to support locals in need this Christmas. Head to the [Redland City Council Website](https://redlandcitycouncil.qld.gov.au) or scan the QR Code.



Maggie's Mates

SPONSORED BY MARKET 2 MARKET



Photo: Supplied.

What's your name? Hi, my name is Jimmy McCartney.

Suburb: I live in Alexandra Hills.

How long have you lived there? From April 2025.

What is your favourite local walk? I love to walk at Wellington Point beach.

Your most treasured toy: I love my monkey; he squeaks for me.

What is your favourite food? I love anything fish, especially sardines.

What's your worst habit? Jumping on Mum when I want to play!

What's your favourite local hangout? I love lying in the aircon on my Mum's bed. It's cool!

Who is your best doggo friend? Meaty, but he is old and gets cranky.

Do you have any funny or embarrassing stories you'd like to share? I love going for rides in my Mummy and Daddy's sidecar – it is a Harley! When I hide in the bottom and pop my head out, people laugh at me as I look like a little alien.

What do people love most about you? I think my funny little face, because my ears look too big for my head.

Jimmy's favourite charity is the RSPCA Queensland, and we have made a \$50 donation on his behalf.



Would you like your best mate to be featured in Maggie's Mates? Email us at sales@market2market.com.au and we'll send you a questionnaire. We will donate \$50 to a registered animal charity of your choice for each profile published in The Community Leader.

Join us for our Community Open Day

Saturday 29 November • 9am – 12pm

Visit our newest residential aged care home, Estia Health Cleveland.

Take a tour, meet the team and hear about the exceptional care being delivered at our beautiful new home.

Estia Health Cleveland
4-10 Doig Street, Cleveland

Estia Health | Aged Care Cleveland



[Q estiahealth.com.au/cleveland](https://estiahealth.com.au/cleveland)



WELCOMING A NEW PET INTO YOUR FAMILY

BY DR NICKY THOMAS, WYNNUM MANLY VETERINARY HOSPITAL

It is always exciting to welcome a new puppy or kitten (or guinea pig, budgie or goldfish!) into your family. Here are some tips to help make the experience positive for everyone involved.

FEEDING

Young animals need to be fed a well-balanced diet which meets all their nutritional requirements. It is important to slowly introduce new foods in order to avoid causing gut upsets – find out what your puppy or kitten has been eating prior to leaving their previous home and continue this for the initial period in your home. If you plan to change your pet’s diet it is best to do so over a week or two, slowly increasing the proportion of new food every few days.

MAKE YOUR HOME PUPPY AND KITTEN FRIENDLY

Puppies and kittens like to explore new environments, and often this involves chewing things. Clear your home of small objects and toxic plants, keep electrical cords tidy and store medications and chemicals securely out of your pet’s reach.

Provide your pet with a quiet and cozy place – young animals need a lot of rest. A crate or small room with comfortable bedding and lower lighting will give them a chance to settle and sleep.

SOCIALISATION AND TRAINING

Start early with socialisation and training. The more experiences your puppy and kitten have at a young age, the better adjusted they will be in the long term. Expose your pet to different household sounds such as vacuum cleaners, lawn mowers and kitchen noises (pots and pans, kettles, etc.) and introduce them to people of different ages. Puppies benefit from attending puppy preschool in order to learn how to interact with other dogs in a controlled environment.



VET VISITS

Book an appointment with your vet for a general health check and to answer any questions you may have about caring for your new pet. Make sure that puppies and kittens are up to date with their vaccinations, have been microchipped, and have started a parasite prevention program. Your vet will be able to help you formulate the best plan for your pet.

Being prepared for a new pet will give them the best start and help them settle into your family as quickly as possible.

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TREAT YOURSELF TO A BIG, BRASSY CHRISTMAS SHOWCASE!

There's something about a brass band. Whether it's a traditional colliery band in North England, the local school band or a services marching band, for aficionados the sound of massed brass creates instant goose bumps and a sudden intake of breath; heads lift and eyes brighten. If you're a brass band addict, the Excelsior Band has a special delight for you with its Big Brassy Christmas show. If you're not an addict yet, come along anyway – you soon will be!

Howard Taylor, Excelsior music director and conductor, says that much of the brass band's popularity is its flexibility.

"There's nothing like the music of a brass band. We're well known for playing for hymns in churches, leading parades, playing jazz, swing, pops, classics, presenting concerts – pretty well everything but rap and bebop!"

Howard particularly loves Christmas concerts, such as the RPAC celebration.

"We've got the favourite Christmas carols and songs the audience can sing along to, montages of some of the favourites, a beautiful euphonium solo, a lot of audience interaction – and some surprises. We're going to have a great, feel-good time!"

How does the conductor keep so many sounds together, maintain balance and contrast, when they're all brass instruments?

"The most important three things sound, sound and sound," he says. "It all



Photo: Supplied.

starts with the tubas, the big basses down at the bottom for the whole band to sit on; then the middle of the band, the horns and the baritones, then the top end – you have to be careful it's not too heavy. The trombones add colour. Getting the blend and the balance comes with rehearsal, as long as the conductor knows exactly what he wants."

And the Big, Brassy Christmas will be exactly what the audience wants. Book your tickets now at rpac.com.au and prepare to be hooked – in the best possible way.

Christmas at Redland Performing Arts Centre

Book your festive get-together now!

Sensational Sopranos
Magical Motown
Brass Band Brilliance

+ FREE EVENTS

Redland Sings! Christmas
Bubble & Light Extravaganza

And more...

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redland
performing arts centre

A GLAMOROUS CHRISTMAS WITH THE 7 SOPRANOS AT RPAC

Australia's most glamorous vocal ensemble, The 7 Sopranos, returns to RPAC with a dazzling Christmas concert on Sunday, December 21.

Prepare to be swept away by stunning harmonies and festive cheer as The 7 Sopranos light up the RPAC Concert Hall with their celebrated Christmas show. Known for their breathtaking voices and sophisticated style, this acclaimed group of professional opera and music theatre singers will perform beloved holiday classics including *Silent Night*, *Let It Snow*, and *It's The Most Wonderful Time of the Year*.

Founded by Artistic Director Tarita Botsman, The 7 Sopranos have captivated audiences across Australia and internationally for over a decade. Their debut album topped the charts, and their follow-up release, *Popcorn: Songs from Stage and Screen*, earned over a million views on YouTube. Critics have hailed them as "sexy, sophisticated and sublime" and "stunning to the ears and eyes".

This festive performance promises vocal fireworks and high glamour, making it the perfect way to celebrate the season. Whether you're a long-time fan or discovering their magic for the first time, The 7 Sopranos will leave you enchanted.

The concert runs for two hours, including a 20-minute interval. Accessible seating and hearing assistance are available.

Don't miss this spectacular celebration of song and style. For tickets, go to rpac.com.au.



Photo: Supplied.

WATCH THINGS GROW: LOCAL AUTHOR LAUNCHES NEW CHILDREN’S BOOK

BY JAN NARY

Jay O’Callaghan has been a storyteller for more than 15 years, writing, directing, producing, and developing music videos, corporate films, advertisements, and short films. Now, his talents have taken him into the world of writing children’s books, where a fertile imagination and wide life experience have provided him a rich store of narrative.

All this, in spite of being diagnosed at the age of 34 with Parkinson’s Disease. He had been diagnosed with Lyme disease eight months earlier.

Jay’s weight plummeted, and his health deteriorated to the point where he was hospitalised and then bound to a wheelchair. The turning point was discovering Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS), which works like a pacemaker for the brain and reduces Parkinson’s Disease tremors.

“After a year and a half of seeing doctors and specialists, I was approved to get surgery. Six weeks later, with physio and determination, I walked out of the hospital,” Jay says.

As his functionality returned, Jay went back to work as a chef – another of his skills – but the workload was too demanding.

“I was teaching my children how to grow their own fruits and vegetables, and I decided that the story would make a great children’s book,” Jay says.

“With my screenwriting knowledge and my love for rhyme, I wrote and storyboarded the book with a close friend. I completed the book, then presented it to an assisted self-publisher (Tellwell) and they loved it.”

Watch Things Grow is the first book in a series; the next book will be about cooking the food the children have grown. Jay is one of only 38 self-published children’s authors who have Parkinson’s Disease.

“My aim in writing this book series is to be a positive role model to my children and many generations of children to ‘Never Give Up’ and reach for their dreams. My new aim is to raise money for Parkinson’s Disease research to finally find a cure,” he says.

Appropriately, the book will be launched at Jay’s childhood primary school, Birkdale State School, where his own boys are now students.

For more information, go to <https://jaylocallaghan.com/>



Photo: Supplied.

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NATURALLY WONDERFUL ... WITH RANGER STACEY



RANGER STACEY THOMSON IS PRINCIPAL ADVISER – COMMUNITY EDUCATION (REDLAND CITY COUNCIL)

It's a privilege to share stories of nature with you each month!

This year has been full of naturally wonderful highlights with a few wild challenges thrown in, courtesy of Mother Nature.

My final column of 2025 is the perfect opportunity to reflect on some special outdoor places and experiences on Redlands Coast. Perhaps what makes this part of the world unique is the diversity of landscapes and habitats, from islands and bays to bushland and conservation reserves.

Spotting and observing wildlife is one of my favourite pastimes, and through my job I've been fortunate to share some memorable moments with the community, both face-to-face and via social media.

In May this year, the inaugural Redlands Coast AdventureFest burst onto the scene with a wide range of events and activities over 10 action-packed days. Highlights for me were the family fun day, which was enjoyed by about 5000 people, and leading a walk to King Island from Wellington Point. AdventureFest is a fantastic reminder of how spectacular our region is. Good news ... it's back in 2026!

With the help of Detection Dogs for Conservation, I hosted a series of walks to witness koalas in the wild, at Point Halloran Conservation Area and Fellmonger Park, Ormiston. These iconic and precious marsupials are cryptic creatures. The instant you spot that ball of grey fur amongst the gum leaves, let me just say, the feeling of excitement is the best ... every single time!

I get a thrill when I see any native animal living its best life in the wild. Everything from a magpie finding a juicy worm in the grass at IndigiScapes, a curlew couple on Coochiemudlo Island posing like statues in an effort to go unnoticed, a big old carpet python perfectly coiled, flying foxes flying out at dusk, or majestic humpback whales frolicking in the ocean off North Stradbroke Island/Minjerribah during their annual migration.

Wishing you a very safe and happy holiday season. I look forward to sharing more stories of nature next year.

Until then ... Stay Wild!
Ranger Stacey



Photo: Supplied.

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THE NIGHT NINJAS ARE OUT THERE...

The name triggers images of a dark and ominous cult, but the Night Ninjas are definitely goodies.

The volunteer-run charity was started ten years ago by a group of friends, one of whom had suffered homelessness. Their original function was to seek out and feed homeless folk in the Redlands and though the Ninjas' role and impact has increased, food distribution is still their main function.

"The most common client request is still for food, especially for a lot of families," says Kym Courtenay, Night Ninjas' secretary. "Once the rent is paid, there isn't always much left for food."

Kym says that sadly, overall demand for assistance has increased.

"Numbers have been creeping up ever since COVID," she says. "Two years ago we thought 12 people coming to the van for a night feed was a high number; recently we've had up to 47. The average age seems to be 25 to 45, with more men than women coming to us – but homeless people do move around a bit, so it's hard know for sure."

The Night Ninjas now have two food vans and supply evening meals on Monday night at Cleveland, Wednesday night at Redland Bay and Thursday night at Birkdale. They also supply two morning meals at Redland Bay Ferry on Wednesday and Thursday.

"We have the necessary approvals and permits and every food or clothing donation that comes in goes out again to our clients," Kym says. "We're supported by individuals and businesses – even some outside the Redlands. Monetary donations cover the cost of the vans and any surplus is saved for a future plan of establishing a drop-in centre for clients."



Photo: Supplied.

At an on-line 'office', volunteers can sign-in to a team that suits their availability and other commitments. The Ninjas have a fortnight's break over Christmas to refresh for the coming year, but Kym admits to keeping her phone close by for emergencies, even over the break.

"Before Christmas we put on a special evening meal and distribute non-perishables with whatever festive specials we can muster," she says. "There are a lot of people struggling out there."

To donate or join the Ninjas, you can ring Kym on 0417 668 926 or go to www.nightninjas.com.au, or Night Ninjas Facebook.



Mozzie season is here

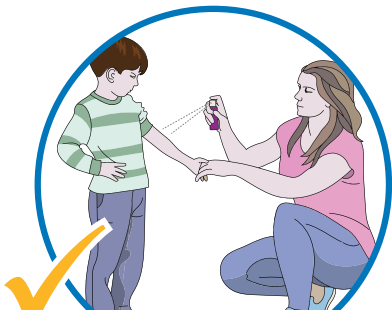
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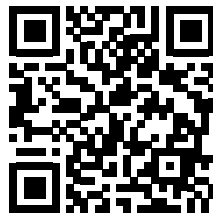
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ELAINE WEST HONoured FOR TWO DECADES OF COMMITMENT TO FORUM

Long-serving Bayside Forum member Elaine West has recently been awarded Life Membership of Forum Communicators, recognising more than two decades of commitment, leadership, and service to the organisation.

Elaine first joined Forum over 20 years ago when she wanted to learn how to run effective meetings at work and speak confidently in front of colleagues. Fortunately, she was invited to attend a Forum meeting – and, as Elaine says, “the rest is history!”

It didn’t take long for her to realise just how much Forum had to offer – as a multi-faceted organisation, Forum Communicators provides countless opportunities for learning, growth and connection.

Elaine joined Bayside Forum, which now meets at the Wynnum Library, and has held many roles over the years in that Forum, including Treasurer, Secretary and President. She recalls that being encouraged to join the State Committee, and later stepping into the State President’s role, was a steep learning curve – but one she embraced with the support of her fellow members.

That same encouragement continued when Elaine became an Accredited Assessor within Forum Communicators. This is a role she has greatly enjoyed, as mentoring and assisting new members

over the years has been one of her most rewarding experiences. Elaine currently serves as Forum Communicators’ Historian and State Secretary. She embraces both of these roles with her trademark diligence, respect, and attention to detail.

In previous years, members of Bayside Forum nominated Elaine for two Redlands Australia Day Awards in recognition of her outstanding contribution to volunteering. That same spirit of service led to Elaine receiving Forum’s highest honour, Life Membership, which was presented to her at Forum’s recent conference. At the same event, Elaine also won the Ruth Don Grand Champion Speaking Award.

Since retiring from the workforce, Elaine and her husband have moved to Nandeebie Retirement Village, where she continues to give generously of her time. She currently serves as Chairman of the Residents’ Committee, liaising with management, organising events and supporting fellow residents. She also keeps communication flowing, producing Nandeebie’s monthly newsletter, and is currently preparing a second book of residents’ short stories.

Elaine says that Forum Communicators has given her the skills and confidence to embrace countless opportunities – both professionally and personally.

“I will be forever grateful for the encouragement and support given to me by so many Forum members, who have helped me on my journey of lifelong learning.”

Elaine, whose formative years were spent on a farm near a small town on the Darling Downs, was “addicted to learning right from the start.” After finishing Year 12 at Warwick High School, she chose to pursue nursing – a profession she loved and still feels deeply connected to. Marriage, three children and limited work opportunities on the Downs saw the family move to Brisbane in the early 1970s. There, Elaine transitioned from nursing to clerical work, which offered more suitable hours for a working mum. A few years later, the family settled in the Redlands, where they still live today.



Photo: Supplied.



LET'S REIN IN THE WASTE

Did you know that more than 17% of your general waste wheelie bin is filled with items that could be recycled?

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MASTER PLAN DELIVERS LONG-TERM VISION FOR THORNESIDE SPORTS HUB

CONTRIBUTED BY REDLAND CITY COUNCIL

Sport at the northern end of Redlands Coast has received a boost with Redland City Council this week endorsing a precinct-wide master plan for the popular William Taylor Memorial Sports Field in Thorneside.

Redland City Mayor Jos Mitchell said the master plan included a multi-stage strategy for upgrading a range of sport, recreation and community facilities within the precinct.

“The master plan provides the venue’s tenant clubs, the broader community and other key stakeholders with clarity on how improvements are proposed to be delivered across the site in future years,” the Mayor said.

“The development of the master plan for this important precinct has been driven by multiple factors, including an increase in sport participation – particularly among women – a rise in demand for space to accommodate emerging sports such as pickleball, and a need to replace ageing assets.

“Through this master plan, Council aims to deliver a modern, high-quality venue that meets the needs and aspirations of all site users – including the tenant clubs and their players.

“This is the first time Council has undertaken precinct-level master planning for an existing sporting facility within the city, setting a new benchmark for how the organisation collaborates with the community, other levels of government and local clubs to deliver a shared long-term vision.”

Adopting the master plan will also unlock additional opportunities for Council and sports clubs to apply for external funding, which can be used to support future proposed development stages.

Upgrades have already commenced at the site, with Council recently installing modern LED lighting on the main football field to bring the infrastructure in line with competition standards and improve energy efficiency.

Stages 2a and 2b of the master plan are being delivered as part of the South East Queensland (SEQ) Liveability Fund, a commitment under the SEQ City Deal, a partnership between the Australian Government, Queensland Government and Council of Mayors (SEQ). This includes upgrades to the recreation zone, community amenities and the precinct car park.

These stages are due for completion by June 2027 and will include a new district-level skate park, BMX

track, pétanque arena, dog off-leash area, multi-court and rebound activity wall, relocated club cricket nets, and enhancements to pedestrian connectivity.

The Australian and Queensland Governments are jointly contributing \$5.71 million in funding to the William Taylor Memorial master plan.

Stage 3 works will focus on improvements to the sports zone – including fields, lighting and courts – while a new shared clubhouse, toilets, change rooms and an upgraded playground and outdoor fitness area are proposed to be delivered during stage 4.

The master plan was developed in consultation with various stakeholders and the community prior to being adopted at this week’s General Meeting of Council.

Division 10 Councillor Paul Bishop said Council would continue to undertake targeted consultation with key stakeholders throughout future planning and design stages of the project.

“It is important that upgrades across the precinct deliver on a collective vision that continues to provide our community with a truly multifunctional and accessible space,” Cr Bishop said.

“At my request in support of local community values,



Mayor Jos Mitchell and Cr Paul Bishop at the William Taylor Memorial Sports Field precinct in Thorneside. Photo: Supplied.

Council has agreed to form a precinct stakeholder and tenant working group to help inform future stages of the master plan.

“I invite members of the public to have their say during the upcoming targeted consultation for the skatepark and BMX track, which will be great additions for our area.

“Feedback provided during this engagement phase, which is set to take place in November, will be used to review the proposed design elements of both facilities.”

The William Taylor Memorial Sports Field Master Plan is available to view online at yoursay.redland.qld.gov.au/william-taylor-upgrade.

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FINDING ALTERNATIVES TO TEXTILE WASTE GOING TO LANDFILLS

CONTRIBUTED BY CATHERINE HEINER

Soroptimist International Bayside recently held its first Soropti-Swap – Recycle, Reuse, Upcycle event. Designed to draw attention to the issue of textile waste going to landfills, the event offered alternative solutions like swapping garments, choosing sustainable natural textile fibres, or upcycling clothing.

Australians hold the unfortunate record of purchasing more clothing per capita than anywhere in the world. This results in large volumes of textile waste going to landfills; meanwhile, many of our waste centres are reaching capacity.

Soropti-Swap served to raise awareness of this problem and to encourage more people to reduce, recycle or upcycle garments and textiles. It also gave people the opportunity to donate garments and swap these for new items to put in their wardrobes.

Guest speaker, Kim Bailey, from East of Grey, told her journey of creating sustainable fashion and her commitment to innovative design.

“It is my aim to design pieces people don’t want to discard,” said Kim, “pieces they hold onto, mend, pass down through generations.

“I want people to feel special in the garments I make... to continually reach for that skirt that makes them want to twirl, or that top they

always get complimented on...I want to bring the art back into fashion, to encourage people to have fun with their outfits.”

Kim then ran a workshop helping people to mend, reuse, or upcycle garments to bring new life to much-loved clothes.

“If we can become aware of a garment’s lifecycle, we can make knowledgeable decisions,” Kim pointed out. “If we choose fabrics made from natural fibres, we can lower the effects...at the end of their life.”

The public was also able to chat with people who upcycle or recycle fabrics and garments. The Wellington Point Village Creative Studio Cooperative sells fabric, cottons, wool, homewares and other gift items at their retail store, as well as running workshops to teach crafts.

Wild and Wayward Designs offers handmade garments and accessories which range from casual to extravagant, emphasising sustainability through minimal, made-to-order pieces.

Julie Salter also showed various quilts made from offcuts and repurposed items. She makes memory quilts for those who have lost loved ones, using the loved one’s clothes.



Photo: Supplied.

Being aware of a company’s supply chain, looking for garments that use natural fibres, and finding ways of reducing textile waste ensure ethical and sustainable environmental practices for our future.

Soropti-Swap was proudly supported by the Redland City Council Mayor and Councillors’ Community Benefit Fund.

CELEBRATE THE SEASON AT THE CHRISTMAS TWILIGHT MARKET

Redlands Coast Collective Markets invites you to a magical evening at Sirromet Winery in Mount Cotton for their Christmas Twilight Market on Saturday December 20, 2025. As the sun sets over the vines, the winery transforms into a festive haven dotted with market stalls – what a great place to shop for last-minute gifts!

From 3:30pm to 8:00pm, guests can explore a curated selection of handmade, artisan, and lifestyle stalls from talented local makers – perfect for finding unique Christmas gifts. Live music sets the tone while visitors enjoy gourmet food truck offerings or pre-purchased picnic hampers, paired with Sirromet wines, Byron Bay beers, or soft drinks.

With a relaxed, family-friendly atmosphere and plenty of open space, it’s the ideal way to celebrate the season with loved ones. Entry is \$10 and includes parking plus a complimentary drink on arrival. Children under 18 enter free.

Organised by Redlands Coast Collective Markets, this twilight event promises a fun and festive experience under the stars. Please note, to protect local wildlife, Sirromet is not a dog-friendly venue.

FESTIVE CHEER AT THE SHIRE CLERK’S COTTAGE CHRISTMAS MARKET

Mark your calendars for Saturday, December 6, as the annual Shire Clerk’s Cottage Christmas Market returns to Wynnum, bringing holiday magic from 8:00am to 1:00pm. This annual event promises a joyful start to the season, with twinkling stalls, festive spirit, and divine Christmas treats.

Visitors can browse over 70 market stalls brimming with hand-crafted treasures. From artisanal gifts to charming decorations, the market offers something for everyone and is perfect for those still hunting for that special Christmas present.

A highlight not to be missed is the famous Devonshire Teas, served fresh on the verandah of the historic Shire Clerk’s Cottage. With over 500 scones sold at last year’s market, it’s clear this classic indulgence is a crowd favourite. Enjoy a warm scone, a cup of tea, and the festive ambiance as you browse the stalls.

Celebrate the season, support local artisans, and make merry memories at the Shire Clerk’s Cottage Christmas Market.

Located at 241 Tingal Rd, Wynnum, the market is a must-visit for locals and visitors alike. For more information, call 3396 9488.

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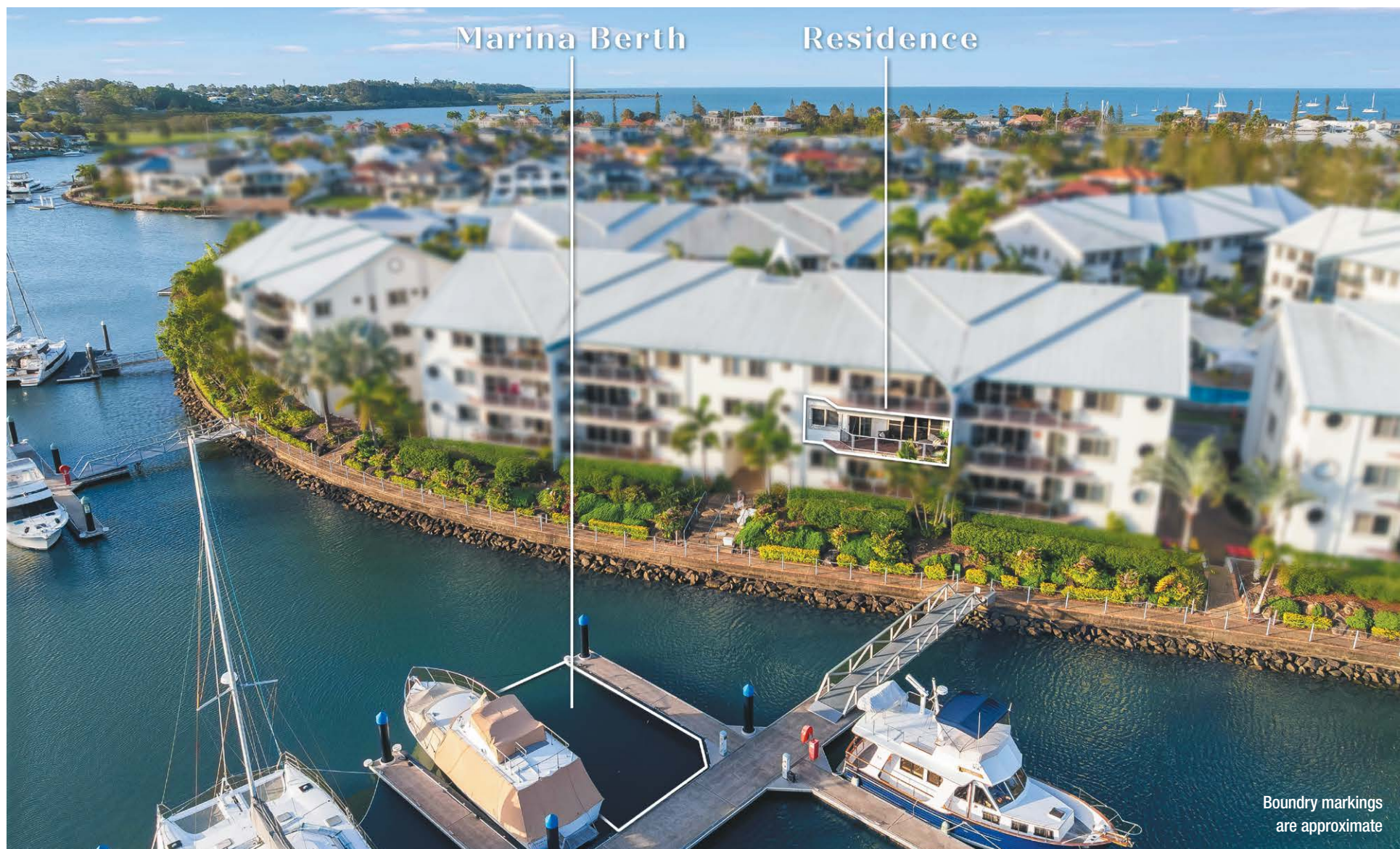
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5 Smart Questions Buyers Must Ask

Getting your home loan? Here's 5 smart questions buyers must ask.

There's nothing quite as exciting and nerve-wracking than buying a home. It's likely to be the single biggest purchase you will ever make. When it comes to navigating the world of home loans, this can be an overwhelming task. From loan jargon to government fees, there's a lot to wrap your head around. The good news? With the right questions (and a little preparation), you can tackle the process with confidence.

Here's your step-by-step guide – plus the smart questions every buyer should ask:

1. How much can I borrow, and what will repayments really cost?

Before falling in love with a new place (and that stunning kitchen splashback), it's essential to know your borrowing limits. Every lender has their own formula, but generally (although not limited to) they'll look at your income, current debts, monthly expenses and the size of your deposit to decide how much you can sensibly borrow.

Don't forget: Just because you can borrow a certain amount doesn't mean you should. Think about what repayments you'll be comfortable with making now – and into the future if interest rates rise, or your circumstances change.

Smart tip: Hop onto a mortgage calculator early in your research for a quick reality check on what your repayments will look like per fortnight or month.

2. How does my deposit size affect loan terms and interest rates? You've been saving for what feels like forever – but how much of a deposit is enough?

Here's where the concept of Loan-to-Value Ratio (LVR) comes in. LVR is simply the percentage of your loan compared to the value of the property – so if you have a \$50,000 (10%) deposit on a \$500,000 home, your LVR (the percentage amount you are borrowing) is 90 per cent.

Why does this matter? The bigger your deposit, the lower your LVR. A lower LVR can mean:

- **Better interest rates:** Lenders often reserve their lowest rates for buyers with lower LVRs.
- **Fewer fees:** Borrow more than 80 per cent of the property value, and you'll likely need Lender's Mortgage Insurance (LMI), which can add thousands to your costs.

If you're still building your deposit, don't stress – many first-home buyers start with less than 20 per cent. But it's worth knowing that every extra \$5,000 you save now could save you a lot more in fees and interest over the life of your loan.

3. What is pre-approval, and why does it matter?

Ever heard someone say they're "pre-approved" and wonder what that really means? Pre-approval (also called conditional approval) is an estimate from a lender of how much you can borrow, based on your financial information, that they would be willing to lend you up to a specified amount – though it's not a final guarantee.

It's a big win if you're a buyer, because:

- **You understand your budget:** No more guessing or over stretching – shop with confidence and laser-focus.
- **You're taken seriously:** Sellers and real estate agents will know you're genuinely in the market.

- **It helps with speed:** Some markets move fast – pre-approval puts you in a stronger position to make an offer or bid at auction.

Pre-approval is usually valid for around 90 days (this can vary by lender). So, timing is everything; it's best to organise it when you're ready to house hunt seriously, but not so early you risk it expiring before you find your dream home.

4. What do I need to get pre-approved?

To get pre-approval, lenders typically want to see a range of documents (so don't leave this until the last minute): Proof of ID, payslips or proof of income, details of your savings and assets, information on any debts or other loans you hold, recent bank statements, and a record of your exact monthly expenses.

5. What extra costs should I budget for?

It's easy to fixate on the deposit and repayments, but there are other upfront costs like:

- **Transfer duty:** A government tax calculated on the purchase price. It is approx. 4%, but visit the ATO website for the actual amount.
- **Legal fees:** For conveyancing and contract reviews. This ensures the paperwork is solid, and your rights are protected.
- **Government and bank fees:** Expect charges for loan applications and property registration.
- **Lenders' Mortgage Insurance (LMI):** If your deposit is under 20 per cent, you'll probably need LMI (an insurance policy that protects the bank, not you, if you can't repay).

Provided by Dave Tidbold.



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KABOOM! MULTI AWARD-WINNING CHILDREN’S SHOW COMES TO WYNNUM!

Wynnum had better brace itself... because this December, the Augathella Spiegeltent is about to explode with festive fun! The infamous mad scientist, Magnus Danger Magnus, is rolling into town with his award-winning spectacle *KABOOM! – The Christmas Chaos Edition*.

From December 14 to 22, families will gather at 166 Bay Terrace for an electrifying 11:00am show that promises more sparks, bangs, and belly laughs than ever before. Magnus, fresh from sell-out seasons across Australia and the UK, has cooked up a brand-new concoction of science and silliness – this time wrapped in tinsel and powered by 20,000 volts of yuletide cheer.

Audiences can expect chaotic mayhem, dazzling experiments, and gadgets so wild they could only be dreamed up by a scientist with a flair for festive mischief. With a trophy cabinet bursting from Perth, Adelaide, Sydney, and Melbourne Fringe festivals, Magnus has proven time and again that his shows are not just science lessons – they’re unforgettable adventures.

Kids will gasp, parents will cheer, and imaginations will ignite as Christmas collides with chemistry in a high-octane celebration of curiosity. It’s messy, it’s merry, and it’s magnificently mad.

So whether you’re a science buff, a thrill-seeker, or simply looking for the ultimate family day out, *KABOOM! Christmas Chaos* is the ticket to holiday magic.

Tickets are on sale now at splash.wynnumwonderland.com – but be quick, because this show is guaranteed to sell out faster than you can say “Merry Magnus!”



Photos: Supplied.

KABOOM!
EXPLOSIVE SCIENCE SHOW

DEC 14-22 | **AUGATHELLA SPIEGELTENT**
BOOK AT WYNNUMWONDERLAND.COM

WHAT IS PLAY-BASED LEARNING IN PREP?

FROM LACHLAN THATCHER, PRINCIPAL, CAPALABA STATE COLLEGE

If you walk into a Prep classroom in Redlands, like the classroom at Capalaba State College, you'll likely see children building towers, dressing up as shopkeepers, or exploring how paint mixes into new colours. It might look like play – and that's precisely the point.

Across the Redlands, most Prep programs follow a play-based learning approach, which means that play isn't just a break from learning – it is learning. Through play, children develop early literacy and numeracy skills, as well as creativity, resilience, and social understanding. When they negotiate who gets the blue block next or measure how high their tower can go, they're practising communication, problem-solving, and self-regulation – skills that build the foundations for lifelong learning.

Teachers design and guide play experiences with purpose, linking them to the Australian Curriculum and early years developmental milestones. This balance of structure and exploration helps each child grow at their own pace while building confidence in a safe and joyful environment.

For families, a play-based Prep means that school feels like an extension of early childhood – a place where curiosity is celebrated and every child is seen as a capable learner. From this strong foundation, children are ready to take on the challenges of formal schooling with enthusiasm and confidence.



Photo: Supplied.

LEARNING CONNECTIONS: YOUNG AND OLD SHARE JOY AND WISDOM

CONTRIBUTED BY VICTORIA POINT STATE HIGH SCHOOL

As part of the Seventh-day Adventist Aged Care Program, Year 10 students from Victoria Point State High School (VPSHS) are developing valuable communication and interpersonal skills while engaging with residents and staff at aged care facilities. The program offers students meaningful insights into life and learning, drawing on the wisdom and experiences of the residents.

For the past two years, students have been visiting seniors. These visits include playing board games, engaging in crafts, playing bingo, participating in trivia, enjoying morning tea by the lake, meeting Busbie the car, and even dancing the Can Can during a Scottish Pipe Band visit. These activities foster a deep connection and create a sense of community between the students and the residents.

Youth Support Coordinator Mrs. MacRae recently accompanied the students as they visited a local aged care facility to celebrate Grandparents Day and present residents with special Grandparent Badges. It was a wonderful opportunity for students to connect across generations and share kindness and respect. The residents look forward to interacting with our students and they light up when the students arrive.



“As a Youth Support Coordinator at Victoria State High School, I am very proud of the students during the weekly visits with the residents at Adventist Retirement Plus, Victoria Point,” said Mrs MacRae.

“Through these weekly interactions students have with the residents, I have observed each student's self-esteem, self-awareness and confidence increase when they arrive, assist the residents with craft and bingo, and having general conversations where the students and residents are learning from each other.”

This intergenerational relationship benefits both students and seniors, providing improved moods, an enhanced sense of purpose, and reduced social isolation. These interactions also contribute to better mental and physical health, including improved cognitive function, higher self-esteem, and stress relief. Moreover, they provide an opportunity for both generations to learn from each other.



Photos: Supplied.

LOCAL GARDENING WITH KAT

MERRY MISTLETOE

BY KAT PEARSON, *GIRL IN THE GREEN*

When someone says mistletoe – especially at this time of the year – most likely your thoughts go straight to a bunch of green above an English doorway and the chance encounter with a dreamy Hugh Grant-esque bloke. Or maybe that’s just me.

Mistletoe is a common name for a freeloading bunch of plants that grow on ‘host’ trees or shrubs. They are hemiparasitic organisms that send their root-like haustoria into the host and suck the water and nutrients they need. Because most mistletoes have leaves, they can perform some level of photosynthesis on their own (hence the ‘hemi’ part). There are around 1500 species worldwide.

English mistletoe (*Viscum album*) mostly grows on trees like hawthorn, apple, and poplar. Whilst its hosts are deciduous and lose their leaves in winter, the mistletoe is evergreen and obvious during the Northern Hemisphere holiday period.

Of course, us Aussies like to do things our own way. We have about 90 species, all of which are endemic (found here and nowhere else) and – because things are bigger down under – we

also have the largest. The Western Australian Christmas tree or *mungee* (*Nuytsia floribunda*) looks like a tree, growing up to 10m tall with a trunk over 1m wide. It attaches itself to the roots of other trees (sometimes over 150m away).

Closer to home, we are more likely to see mistletoe in eucalypts. Look closely and you may see a tree that seemingly has a branch with a different leaf type – that’s probably mistletoe!

Mistletoes are spread by birds, with seeds excreted in poop. The seed sticks to a branch, germinates, and voila! A new plant is formed. Some mistletoes are host-specific, which means they will only grow on a certain species of tree, whilst others will grow on a wide range of plants. They usually will not kill their host, but may cause some local stunting. If you are lucky enough to have one growing in one of your own trees, don’t remove it. Embrace the biodiversity. Mistletoes are an important part of our ecosystem and provide food and habitat for insects and animals. And who knows, you might find yourself standing underneath it, “just a girl, standing in front of a boy”.



The mistletoe has a different leaf shape – it has droopy clusters of leaves hanging down and is more yellow in colour, whilst the gum tree’s leaves are a greeny-grey colour. Inset: The mistletoe branches are the darker branches on top and have grown into the pale-coloured host branch. Photo: Kat Pearson.

ABOUT KAT

I love gardening, growing my own food and plants in general. I’ve been working on our current garden in subtropical Brisbane for the last six-plus years, but have been gardening for much, much longer in all sorts of places. I’m an ex-engineer, recently turned horticulturist (life’s too short not to work in something you love!). I grow edibles and ornamentals in an often wild, rambling jungle, filled with birds and bugs, including a handful of pet chooks and a brand new puppy (who likes to chase said chickens, and is not averse to helping me dig a hole!).





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CONTRIBUTED BY ADELIA BERRIDGE

The desired goals of chemotherapy are to cure cancer, shrink tumours before surgery, destroy remaining cancer cells, and/or manage symptoms and prolong life. The other side of chemotherapy is the harsh side effects when healthy cells are damaged.

Chemotherapy affects nerves and muscles, and causes fatigue, appetite changes, nausea or vomiting, constipation, diarrhoea, thinking and memory changes, mouth problems, skin and nail changes, sexuality, intimacy and fertility issues, changes in hearing, body odour, hair loss, and vision are a few commonly known side effects reported on the Cancer Council’s website.

Ormiston resident Judy Rose knows all too well how cancer and chemotherapy affect families.

“When my cousin died of breast cancer at 42, her girls were still quite young. That was over 20 years ago, when far less was known about treatments. My partner got breast cancer three years ago, shocking us with the fact that men can get it too. He is a survivor and thriving thanks to rapid and effective treatments.

“Families must navigate a complex mix of emotions like grief, anger, and guilt, while also dealing with the practical challenges of treatment, finances, and altered family roles. While there is so much more hope today and higher survival rates, we need continued funding for research to find a cure.”

The Do It for Cancer fundraiser, held during November, is a key fundraising initiative of the Cancer Council. This year marked Judy’s second of swimming 9km to raise funds through sponsorship.

“We all need to do what we can to make this ‘yesterday’s disease’, so that yellow daffodils will just be admired for their beauty, not what they represent, because I know how much this disease impacts families,” said Judy.

Sponsorship is a donation for research into new treatments, support for people affected by cancer through information and services, and funding for prevention programs to reduce cancer risk.

As this article goes to print, Judy will continue her daily swim and is very grateful for all who were part of it. Kindness and support from the community have had a profound impact on cancer research, and it could not have been achieved without the generous donations.

RESOURCES:

Cancer information sourced from the Cancer Council: <https://www.cancercouncil.com.au/cancer-information/cancer-treatment/chemotherapy/side-effects/>
Judy Rose’s donation page: <https://sms.nbcf.org.au/9Lw1.iIT>



Judy and Gerry. Photo: Supplied.

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NEW RESEARCH REVEALS WHAT MAKES OLDER AUSTRALIANS HAPPY

FROM NATIONAL SENIORS

A new report released by National Seniors Australia (NSA) reveals the secret to happiness for older Australians. It highlights that happiness means different things to different people and older people shouldn't be stereotyped.

More than 2,500 survey respondents aged 50 and older were asked to write about something that would help them maintain or increase their happiness. The results confirm older Australians are a diverse group with different interests, needs, and desires.

"As you'd expect, some people identified more money, secure housing, or good health as key factors that would improve their happiness," NSA Chief Executive Officer Chris Grice said.

"But they weren't the only factors, with others nominating varied pathways to happiness such as 'Living a Dan Beuttner's Blue Zone lifestyle'.

"We took a big picture approach to identify the core principles, ideals, and beliefs that shape people's personalities and drive their lives. From the

comments, we developed 11 'personas' to try and capture what drives people's happiness.

"For example, the report describes a 'Stability Seeker' persona for those who want social and technological change to slow right down. As one respondent wrote, 'As you age, I believe, that happiness is very closely linked to security and certainty'.

"'Keen Participators' find happiness in activities that entertain and provide new experiences. And 'Policy Enthusiasts' are passionate about reforming Age Pension rules, supports for carers, or downsizing incentives, to name a few."

Personas. Happiness comes from:

- 1. **Survival Realists** – having enough money to cover the basics and where possible, a little bit extra.
- 2. **Fierce Independents** – staying independent through health, wealth, and control of life's choices.
- 3. **Keen Participators** – having the time, money, and ability to pursue interests, such as travel.

- 4. **Nest Featherers** – having a fulfilling home life, with a loving partner or solo bliss, and pets.
- 5. **Social Connectors** – relationships with family, friends, and the means to find like-minded others.
- 6. **Policy Enthusiasts** – improvements to retirement income, aged care, and other ageing supports.
- 7. **Global Idealists** – an active civil society, government integrity, environmental protection, peace.
- 8. **Stability Seekers** – a sense of security, and assurance the life we've planned won't be upended.
- 9. **Inner Peaceniks** – having a positive mindset, attitude, faith and spiritual connections.
- 10. **Respect Warriors** – respect for older people's contributions and eliminating ageism.
- 11. **Unique Individuals** – all kinds of interests from reiki to better disabled access to waterways.



Photo: Supplied.

"As the findings reaffirm, each one of us is unique. While 'government subsidised red wine' made the list in good humour, this report helps us to remember and celebrate older people's diversity and complexity.

"Our personas are a celebration and recognition of the diversity of older people. There are many ways to grow old and older people can't and shouldn't be boxed into ageist stereotypes.

"If we want a society that is happy, it is important to embrace and celebrate these differences."



LOCAL POETRY CHRISTMAS

BY GEOFF SMILEY

Christmas here is often told
as though winter is about.
But all of us reside
where the sun shines bright.
Summer warmth, not a fireside
is our Christmas delight.

Christmas, first of all,
is a time to notice
an event that enthrals;
a baby's birth and sacrifice.
The love God has for all,
His gift, the Christ.

An Australian Christmas,
Like all around the world,
reminds of joyous things;

of families, parties, friends.
We all love Christmas,
It is hope that never ends.

Gone are the distractions
of the past year.
Christmas and its joys,
bring peace so near.
Children's excitement for these.
What fun, Christmas is here.

The Christmas tree stands;
decorations everywhere.
Presents waiting to be shared,
anticipation in the air,
festive plans abound.
Yes, Christmastide is here!
© Geoff Smiley



Christmas is a wonderful time of the year for most people. It is when the usual preoccupations and stresses of the year can be set aside for a short period. This, even if you are not an observer of Christian rituals.

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BOOZY CHRISTMAS BALLS RECIPE

Here's one for the grown-ups: a decadent, rum-laced treat that's so indulgent it should probably only be enjoyed at Christmas time. We've made these with a spiced rum and they're delicious!

INGREDIENTS

- 250g biscuits (like Nice, Scotch Finger, or even Ginger Nut or Biscoff biscuits for a festive twist)
- 1 x 395g can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 cup of desiccated coconut
- 1/4 cup of cocoa powder
- 1/3 cup of rum (or, if you're feeling adventurous, use a spiced rum like Sailor Jerry's or Kraken Black Spiced Rum for extra depth of flavour – but use plain biscuits if you're using spiced rum)
- 1/2 cup of desiccated coconut for rolling (or chocolate sprinkles or hundreds and thousands if you prefer)

METHOD

1. Crush the biscuits into a fine crumb using a food processor, or put them in a freezer bag (tied up) and smash with a rolling pin.
2. Combine ingredients: In a large mixing bowl, add the crushed biscuits, sweetened condensed milk, 1 cup of desiccated coconut, cocoa powder, and rum. Mix thoroughly until everything is evenly combined and the mixture is sticky.
3. Chill the mixture in the fridge for about 30 minutes (this makes rolling easier).
4. Remove your mix from the fridge. Scoop heaped teaspoons of the mixture and roll between your palms to form balls. Tip: wetting your hands can make the balls easier to roll without sticking.
5. Roll each ball in the extra desiccated coconut (or sprinkles) to coat.



6. Place the finished balls on a tray lined with baking paper and refrigerate for at least 1 hour before serving. Store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to a week.

For a fun twist: Build a Christmas tree using the balls, starting with a circular layer of balls as a base, building up to a single ball at the top of the tree using toothpicks to secure the structure.



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‘Tis the season to be jolly – and Jonathon Welch knows just how to make it happen with *Redland Sings!* – singing community workshops.

Jonathon, who is celebrating 45 years as a professional performer and was awarded an AM for his ground-breaking social justice initiatives, initiated the annual *Redland Sings!* in 2022 in collaboration with RPAC. After this year’s cyclone he decided to widen the concept and with the assistance of a RADF grant developed a series of three events. Workshops at Macleay and Stradbroke Islands were celebrated in November but it’s not too late to book for the December 9 event at RPAC.

“Coming up to Christmas can be a difficult time for a lot of people so the three *Redland Sings!* workshops were designed for everyone of all ages and abilities, free hour-long celebrations of singing, joy, laughter and community,” Jonathon says. “The Island events were celebrated in Social Inclusion Week, which made them particularly appropriate.”

The RPAC *Redland Sings!* will celebrate the joy of shared song on December 9 at RPAC, starting at 6:00pm. Registrations are essential; phone 3829 8131 to book.

The songs will be well-known favourites so it’s time to loosen your larynx, take a deep breath – and sing together!



Photo: Supplied.

KOALA BREEDING SEASON CALLS FOR A BACKYARD MAKEOVER

FROM REDLAND CITY COUNCIL

It’s December, and koalas are still on the move! During breeding season, these iconic marsupials travel through suburban areas in search of mates, new territory and safe habitat. But as they navigate backyards, roads and fences, they face a range of human-made hazards that can threaten their safety and survival.

The good news? With a few simple changes, you can turn your garden into a safe haven for wildlife. Even better, these actions are easy to do and make great weekend projects for the whole family. Let the backyard makeover begin!

Go native with your planting. Choose native trees and shrubs, and if space allows, include eucalyptus species that provide essential food and shelter for koalas. Linking green spaces between properties creates green corridors for koalas to move safely through neighbourhoods without crossing busy roads.

Make your pool wildlife safe. Swimming pools can be a hidden danger. Koalas are strong swimmers but can struggle to climb out of steep-sided pools. A simple DIY escape ramp, made from rubber mesh or thick rope attached to a floating device, gives them a way out and could save a life.

Rethink your fencing. Solid aluminium panel fencing can trap or injure wildlife. Adding a timber climbing pole or modifying sections of fencing can help koalas and other native animals move through your yard safely.



Attach a thick rope to a floating device so koalas can climb out.
Photo credit: Queensland Government.

Be a responsible pet owner. Koalas are most active at night, so securing your dogs after dark helps prevent dangerous encounters for both pets and wildlife.

Small actions at home can make a big difference. By working together, we can ensure our backyards are not just places for people, but safe spaces for the wildlife we share them with.

Find out more at www.redland.qld.gov.au/koala



Help koalas move through yards by leaning a pole against your fence.
Photo credit: Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation.

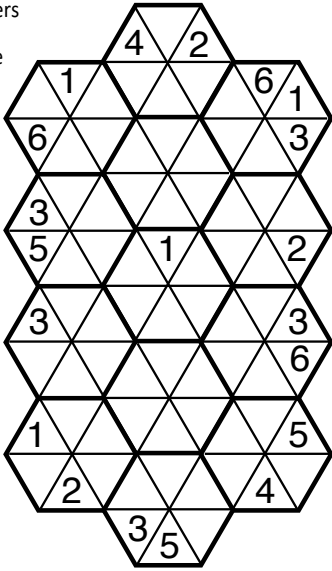
Sudoku

Fill in the blank cells using numbers from 1 to 9. Each number can only appear once in each row, column and 3x3 block.

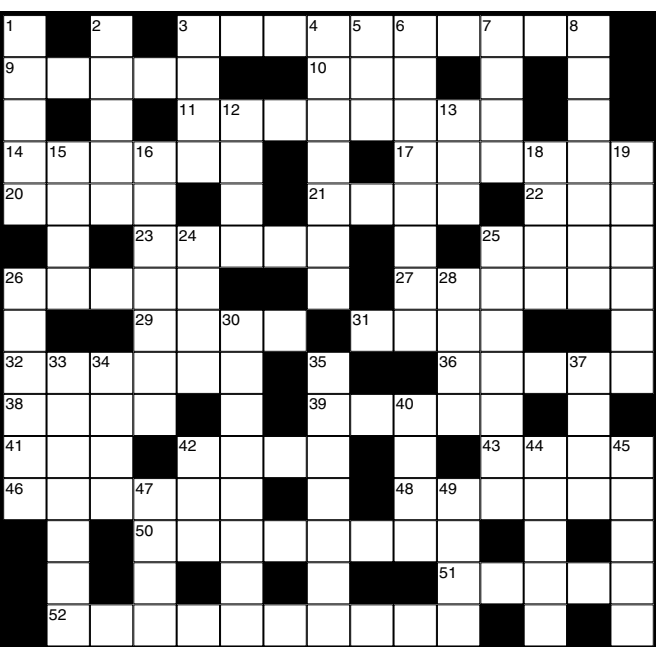
					2	9		
		1					3	
7						8	4	
3	4		7				1	
		8					9	
		2			5			
9	8	4	5					
		7		3	1			
						5		4

Quick Workout

Fit the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 into the hexagons so that where the hexagons touch, the numbers will be the same. No number is repeated in any hexagon.



Crossword

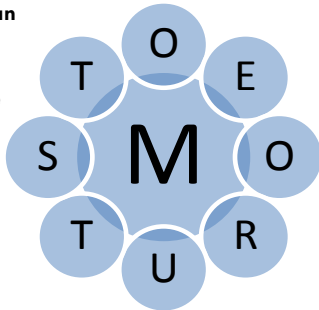


Focus

An All Australian Word Game

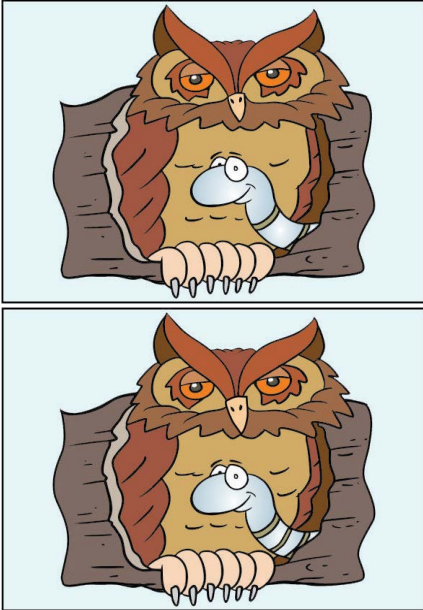
- * Each word must contain the centre 'Focus' letter and each letter may be used only once
- * Each word must be four letters or more
- * Find at least one nine letter word
- * No swear words
- * No verb forms or plurals ending in 's'
- * No proper nouns and no hyphenated words

TODAY'S FOCUS Good: 16 words
Very good: 24 words
Excellent: 39 words



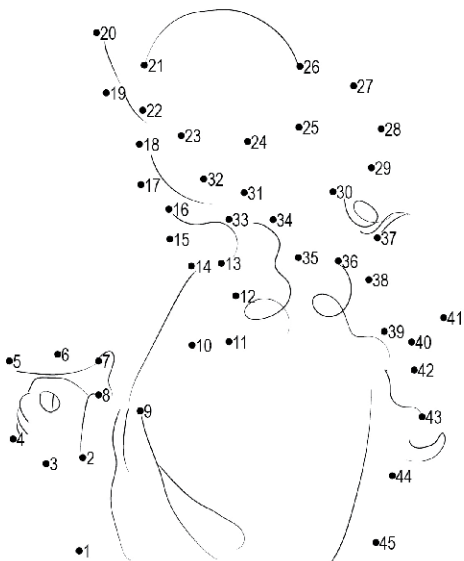
Reference: Macquarie Concise Dictionary
Focus No. 3900

Spot the 5 Differences



Join the Dots

What is this? Find out by joining the dots.



ACROSS

- 3 Representative group
- 9 Oily fruit
- 10 Play on words
- 11 Approximate calculation
- 14 Refer casually to
- 17 Heavenly bodies
- 20 Ooze
- 21 Musical instrument
- 22 Regret
- 23 Not hollow
- 25 Deep mud
- 26 Short gaiters
- 27 Male honey bees
- 29 As well
- 31 Stretched tight
- 32 Agricultural implement
- 36 Mouse-like mammal
- 38 Send out

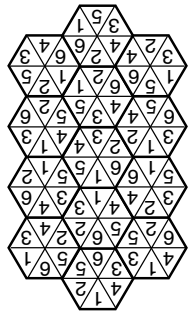
DOWN

- 1 Roman garments
- 2 Weapon
- 3 Exploit
- 4 Serial part
- 5 Adhesive
- 6 Large South American boa
- 7 Article
- 8 Upbringing

- 12 Vend
- 13 Digit
- 15 Bound
- 16 Parvenu
- 18 Ireland (poet)
- 19 Teeter
- 24 Capital of Norway
- 25 Parents
- 26 Plot
- 28 Trick
- 30 Birds
- 33 Corrected
- 34 Girl's name
- 35 USA
- 37 Otherwise
- 40 Crippled
- 42 Resting place
- 44 Top room
- 45 Groom the feathers
- 47 Rodents
- 49 Consumer

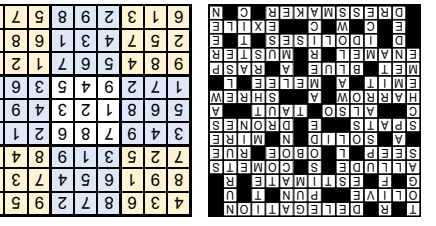
Solutions

Puzzles and pagination supplied by Auspac Media



term tomo totem utmost
serum smote smut stem storm strum sturner sumo
mote motor motto mouse mouser most mouse room
FOCUS: moor mouse moot mooter more morose most mote

extra stripe on snake.
right side, marking on eye changed, extra feather on chest.
SPOT THE 5 DIFFERENCES: Break larger, extra feather on



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SLEEP AND ENERGY SUPPORT: NATUROPATHIC ESSENTIALS FOR A VIBRANT LIFE

BY CHEREE SHELDON, QUALIFIED NATUROPATH, FLANNERY'S ORGANIC WHOLEFOOD MARKET, VICTORIA POINT HOME CO CENTRE

As the year draws to a close, many of us feel our energy waning and our sleep less restorative. The demands of daily life can leave us feeling run down and longing for a break. But what if you could naturally boost your energy and improve your sleep, without relying on quick fixes?

FOUNDATIONS OF WELLNESS

The journey to better sleep and sustained energy starts with the basics.

- 1. Hydration** is key: drink plenty of clean, filtered water, ideally with added electrolytes and minerals to replenish your body. It's simple advice, and colloidal minerals are an effective way to hydrate at a cellular level.
 - 2. Nutrition** is another cornerstone. Focus on a whole-food diet rich in organic, local, and regenerative foods. Healthy fats, nutrients, and superfoods can supercharge your meals and support both body and mind.
 - 3. Sleep** is the backbone of energy and health. It restores the brain, clears metabolic waste, and supports overall wellbeing. The glymphatic system, which helps detoxify the brain, works best during deep sleep.
- To optimise sleep, stick to a consistent routine and aim for seven to nine hours of sleep nightly. Switch off devices at least two hours before bed to reduce blue light exposure and support melatonin production. Supportive tools like mouth tape, nasal strips, eye masks, and earplugs can help you drift into deeper sleep.



Photo: Supplied.

4. Medicinal Mushrooms are nature's adaptogenic powerhouses. Revered in traditional Chinese medicine for over 2,000 years, they offer remarkable benefits for sleep, energy, and overall resilience.

Jing is our top pick for relieving fatigue and helping the body adapt to stress. When your Jing is strong and stocked, your body is resilient, your libido is alive, your motivation flows, and you feel connected and present. When depleted, you can experience fatigue, burnout, hormonal imbalance, and feel out of step with the rhythms of life.

Reishi (*Ganoderma lucidum*) is often called the "mushroom of immortality" due to its ability to cultivate a calm spirit, enhance deep sleep, and support healthy heart function. It works by modulating the body's stress response, supporting the nervous system, and promoting relaxation.

Cordyceps is another standout adaptogen, traditionally used to boost stamina, endurance, and core energy reserves. It can help restore resilience, especially during periods of high stress or burnout.

HOW MUSHROOMS SUPPORT SLEEP AND ENERGY

Medicinal mushrooms are adaptogens, meaning they help the body adapt to stress and restore balance. They can be consumed as teas, tinctures, powders, or capsules. Look for high-quality, wood-grown, full-spectrum extracts for maximum potency. Incorporate them into your daily routine – add to smoothies, coffee alternatives, or evening teas – to experience their gentle, cumulative benefits.

MASTERING YOUR CIRCADIAN RHYTHM

Supporting your sleep-wake cycle is a daily balancing act. Mastering your internal clock can be challenging, but returning to basics and utilising plant medicine can make a significant difference. If your energy feels depleted, consider reducing your caffeine intake. While it offers a temporary boost, long-term reliance can disrupt cortisol levels and vitality. Swap coffee for herbal teas like Tulsi or decaf. Try a morning ritual of a cacao, superfood, and nut smoothie bowl or a collagen matcha latte for a gentle lift.

Consult with a naturopath to determine the best options tailored to your unique needs. Quality supplements and a whole-food diet can make a real difference in your energy and sleep.

Always consult a qualified healthcare professional before starting any supplements to ensure they're appropriate for your individual needs.



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LOCAL READERS

A BOOK REVIEW – GHOST CITIES BY SIANG LU

BY ANNE CROWLEY

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAID:

"Ghost Cities is as beautiful as it is honest as it is funny as it is silly, absurd and satirical.

“A Chinese-Australian character named Xiang Lu gets fired from his job at the Chinese consulate in Sydney after it’s discovered he doesn’t speak the language, and has been relying on Google Translate for his work. The incident goes viral under the hashtag #BadChinese and attracts the attention of a megalomaniacal film director, Baby Bao, who uses Lu to attract press for his latest film. Bao’s movie is based on an ancient text whose empirical story is to be filmed in one of China’s ‘ghost cities’: vast developments quickly built for the country’s booming population that stand mostly empty.”

Source: *The Guardian*.

MY THOUGHTS:

I agree with the opening description by *The Guardian*! This is a feast and a labyrinth of a book. The interspersed stories of the ancient Chinese city and modern Port Man Tou, and their whimsical dictators, highlight parallels despite the centuries between. "What other role in this world is more like that of Emperor than Director? Both are in full command of his world, his domain, his set."

“The Emperor was uniquely talentless and took enormous pride in this fact.” So too was the Director, whose films showed smart watches on historical characters – accidentally on purpose! Each was prone to bankrupting their realms, building huge edifices to cast their shadows over their minions. Each dispatched frequent missives to the population pronouncing erratic new edicts that increased the stranglehold on people’s freedoms, and extreme punishments for non-compliance. And each banished their deputies at whim when displeased – the Emperor ‘rehousing’ them in a tower named ‘the six levels of hell’, and the Director ‘recasting’ them into slave-like roles in a factory.

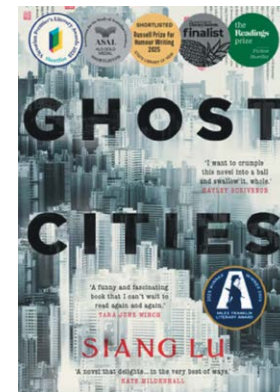
I saw resemblances among these two and a current leader we hear about daily!

The book's dark side explores duality, duplicity, reality and illusion, for example, in the ancient city, the Imperial Chef created entire banquets from tofu made to mimic a smorgasbord of delicious treats: "Attendees reveled and feasted as if their very lives depended on it". In Port Man Tou, a bookshop the setting for the launch of Lu's ghost-written-book is filled with books, but all are completely blank except for a one-line message aimed at manipulating Lu and his girlfriend.

Other common themes are: art versus artifice – the imposter farmer had created a garden of fruit made of painted stones; “He had constructed a thing that was useless in its beauty and beautiful in its uselessness.” And the question of ‘what is perfection?’ – “Everything crumbles in time, but that which is conceived as a ruin is forever perfect in its ruin. Its deliberate imperfections appeared flawless.”

And woven through each setting is a love story, with language and stories at the heart.

I enjoyed the word-play and sense of the ridiculous, and there are so many topics to explore, making for a very enjoyable thought-provoking book club conversation. I'd recommend it to both individual readers and to book clubs — but you will need to read it at least twice to plumb its depths.



AN ALL-AUSTRALIAN STORY: DINKUM ASSORTED HAS IT ALL!

Comedy, drama, tension, conflict and comradeship – it's all there in Linda Aronson's *Dinkum Assorted*, the next play to take the stage at Redlands Coast Museum.

Theatre Redlands will present the all-Australian story of a biscuit factory under threat as the annual January production in 2026.

It's 1942 and Australia is expecting to be invaded. The remote township of Warrabadanga is temporary home for 2,000 American airmen and the biscuit factory, soul and centre of the town, is under threat of closure. The 15 women who work there, who are as assorted as the biscuits, take on the battle (with some singing and dancing) to keep the biscuits baking. Director Jan Nary says she fell in love with the play on the first reading.

“Aronson has constructed a beautiful theatre piece,” she says. “The relationships in the group and the town are like a machine with many small moving parts; if one is affected by something they’re all affected to some degree. And they’re all impacted by the war; as individuals, as citizens and as women whose historical roles are changing.”

Jan says that casting a play with 15 women characters, aged from 17 to 70-plus, had proved less challenging than she'd expected.

"There's no doubt about it, this place is a seething hotbed of artistic talent!" she laughs. "We have a wonderful crew as well – mainly fellows, so there's some gender balance. However the two 'special extras' in the cast are female – Lola the biscuit oven and Rita the goat."

Dinkum Assorted will run for two weekends from Friday 23 January. For more information, visit redlandscostmuseum.org.au.



Photo: Supplied.

LOCAL FISHING WITH SPERO

WHERE TO CATCH THE BEST FISH THIS CHRISTMAS

BY SPERO KARTANOS

Where has the year gone?! The end of 2025 is fast approaching, and let's hope that in 2026, the fishing is just as good.

When the weather allows, the bay has plenty of fish for all, whether you're a fishing fanatic, someone who likes a weekend fishing on the bay, or you're dropping a line with the kids and family.

So, here is my rundown of the species available to us this time of year that most of us go to catch in the bay.

Whiting: It's the easiest and the best fishing for the kids and the family, and probably the best tasting for most of us. You'll find whiting in good numbers at the southern side of the Chain Banks, Amity Banks, the Maroon Bank side of the Rous Channel, and, of course, the Sand Hills at Moreton Island and the Blue Hole. In the north-easterlies, they'll be around Horseshoe Bay at Peel Island, where there are plenty of whiting, but also lots of traffic. The best bait is sandworms, bloodworms, and peeled small prawns, as well as squid strips, on a paternoster rig while drifting.

Squire/Snapper: These tasty fish will be closest to Wynnum Manly on the eastern side of Peel, Mud, and St Helena Islands, and from



Wellington Point all around Peel Island (in particular Lazaret Gutter), and of course Harry's Artificial Reef and Mt Cotton Reach in the Rous, and further north to Cowan Reef. I prefer the shallow reefs close to our Bay Islands, with smaller currents. Fishing in depths of 18 to 21 feet makes it fun – run a rig with enough weight to get to the bottom on a 3.0 to 6.0 snapper hook. The best baits for me are small whole whiting, garfish (whiting heads are my favourite), but squid, cuttlefish, octopus, mullet flesh, and grinner fillets will all catch a fish or two. I prefer a good run in the tide – especially outgoing. Also, sweetlip, bream, and flathead are all bi-catches while fishing for squire.

School Mackerel: The best way to catch school mackerel is with diving boards. I recommend yamashita, delta, or yozuri, or orange boards with 3-inch spoons trolling around the 5 to 7 knots around the bay. Try around Hope Banks, the basin at Peel Island, the Rous Channel, Rainbow Channel, and in the deeper water at the Sand Hills, Shark Spit, the Shipping Channel, and the Measured Mile Beacon. You can also float a pilly out around any of the bay markers, or when you are whiting fishing, there are always mackerel swimming around.

Spotty Mackerel should start showing up in the next few weeks, and you can catch them trolling, but a chrome slug thrown and retrieved in a feeding school is the way to catch them. The tradition of them

coming into the bay has gone pear-shaped, so let's hope this is a good season.

Let's not forget **Sand Crabs** – they have been in great numbers over the last few months throughout the bay.

And, last but not least, one of the best-tasting critters in the bay: **Tiger Squid**. They're starting to show up in all the weed banks in the bay on the western side of Moreton Island, the Rous Channel, Small Boat Channel, Amity Banks, Rainbow Channel, and Green Island. But...you need nice, clear water and a couple of good quality squid jigs. Cast and slow retrieve, and you should get a squid and a face full of ink (this happens to us all)!

So, have fun and be careful. Watch the weather and all the extra boat traffic over the holidays, and look out for a couple of the nastiest of creatures in the bay: stonefish, which are normally found on the bottom, but this time of the year they float on the surface; and Moreton Bay morbakka jellyfish (Irukandji species), which we have in the bay around the Bay Islands, off Wynnum, Wellington Point, and King Island – they will be seen in bigger numbers as the water warms.

To all the readers, Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year, and good fishing to you all! See you in 2026.

FIGHT THE BITE: ACT NOW TO MOSQUITO-PROOF YOUR HOME

FROM REDLAND CITY COUNCIL

Redlands Coast residents are urged to add mosquito prevention measures to their preparations for the summer storm season.

Redland City Council undertakes a year-round mosquito management program, monitoring known breeding sites and undertaking regular ground and aerial treatments using helicopters, quad bikes and drones.

During the peak mosquito breeding season from November to April, there are a number of simple steps residents can take to protect themselves and mosquito-proof their properties as much as possible.

You can reduce the number of mosquitoes around your home by ensuring your screens are in good condition and by emptying pooled water from items in your backyard, such as pot plant bases, blocked roof gutters, bird baths, sagging tarps or covers and old tyres.

Unscreened rainwater tanks and unused swimming pools can also breed mosquitoes, so keep pools well maintained and chlorinated and screen rainwater tanks if possible.

Mosquitoes are considered a designated pest under the Public Health Act 2005 and are known to transmit disease to humans, including Ross River Fever and Barmah Forest Virus.

While biting midges, which breed in tidal flats, don't carry disease, they can also be a nuisance for some residents.

While the chemicals used for Council's mosquito management treatments are target specific and are not harmful to people or the environment, Council does not treat for biting midges as the chemicals available to treat midge are general insecticides.

If these chemicals were used in the tidal flats, it would be harmful to aquatic life and other creatures important to our ecosystem.

The chemicals required to treat for biting midge are also not registered for use in the Moreton Bay Marine Park.

Residents can protect themselves from mosquitoes and biting midges while outdoors by wearing light coloured, long, loose-fitting clothing, using insect repellent, mosquito coils or plug-in insecticide



Photo: Supplied.

burners, and by avoiding going outdoors at dusk and dawn where possible.

For more information on Redland City Council's mosquito management program, visit Council's website.



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Getting Christmas sorted

BY LAURENCE SMITH, FINANCIAL ADVISER, UEM WEALTH, AUTHORISED REPRESENTATIVE, LIFESPAN FINANCIAL PLANNING PTY LTD AFSL 229892

What happened to 2025? It feels like Australia Day was last week, and now it's time to prepare for Michael Bublé and Mariah Carey to be played in shopping centres again.

And it is expected to be the most wonderful time of year again, particularly by retailers. The Deloitte 2025 Retail Holiday Report suggests that 84% of retailers expect sales to grow compared to last year, and a survey of consumers in the same report suggests that 76% of respondents expect to spend at least the same amount or more than they did last year¹.

Here are my top five ideas for gift giving that will not leave you with January credit card regret.

1. MAKE A LIST

The best place to start is to consider who you will be buying gifts for. Start from your inner circle and work your way out. Depending on your budget, you can decide which people make it to your list and start thinking about who is higher or lower on your list. This leads to the next step.

2. CREATE A BUDGET

Maybe you've been diligently saving some cash aside throughout the year, specifically for Christmas gifts, or maybe you have a more general savings strategy. Either way, one of the best ways to make sure you don't overspend is to consider realistically what resources you have. Having a credit card limit that you plan to carry into the

new year and pay off over a few months doesn't count. Try to avoid this if you can.

3. CHOOSE MEANINGFUL GIFTS

Rather than hitting the shops with a vague idea of what you need to buy and looking for inspiration while at the shops, sit for an evening and think about the person you are buying for. When giving a gift to a family member or a friend, consider what their interests and hobbies are and narrow down your selection to what you feel they may truly appreciate. For children, there is a formula that can help: Something they want, something they need, something to wear, something to read.

4. GIVE YOUR TIME

One of the most memorable and enjoyable gifts that I remember ever giving was a voucher to my grandmother for a lunch date with me. She was so happy to receive it, and it created a wonderful memory that I still get to recall on occasion. Plus, Sizzler toast was irreplaceable. Sometimes the best gift you can give can't be bought and wrapped, and it's definitely worth considering.

5. PLAN AHEAD FOR NEXT YEAR

If Christmas this year comes up before you know it, then get ahead of it by starting in January. An ASIC article from 2024 suggested that, on average, Aussies planned on spending \$783 on Christmas.² Short-term savings interest aside, starting in January and saving \$20 each week will allow you to stash \$860 aside by November 2026.

That may cover a portion of your spending for next year and is easily done through most bank providers.

I'd also suggest keeping your list of gift recipients from step 1 and reviewing it every month or so to jot down some gift ideas. Planning ahead may even allow you to take advantage of sales that occur throughout the year.

It's not rocket science when you get down to it, but a few small, good habits will make a massive difference to the holiday season.

1 (https://www.deloitte.com/content/dam/assets-zone1/au/en/docs/industries/csm_Retail%20Holiday%20Report-2025.pdf)

2 (<https://www.asic.gov.au/about-asic/news-centre/find-a-media-release/2024-releases/24-272mr-asic-s-moneysmart-reveals-how-aussies-plan-to-spend-this-christmas/>)

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Laurence Smith, Financial Adviser at UEM Wealth, part of the UEM Group



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